



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COWBOY BANDIT HEADED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR ROBBING EIGHT TEXAS BANKS**

**United States Attorney Johnny Sutton** announced today that 44-year-old Ernest Rodriguez, Jr., of San Antonio, Texas, a.k.a. the Cowboy Bandit, was sentenced to 115 months in federal prison for robbing eight Texas banks and being a convicted felon in possession of a firearm. In addition to the prison term, United States District Judge Lee Yeakel ordered that Rodriguez pay \$40,322.00 restitution to the banks and be placed under supervised release for a period of three years after completing his prison term.

"Today, the cowboy bandit got some Texas justice," said United States Attorney Johnny Sutton.

In pleading guilty on September 29, 2004, Rodriguez admitted that he stole a total of \$31,592 from five different Austin banks:

- 1) \$4,550 from the Bank of America at 3900 North IH-35 on February 21, 2004;
- 2) \$3,968 from the Bank of America at 9701 Research Boulevard on March 3, 2004;
- 3) \$11,660 from the Travis County Credit Union at 1101 IH-35 North on March 9, 2004;
- 4) \$2,550 from the Wells Fargo Bank at 3221 Red River Street on April 4, 2004;
- 5) \$8,864 from the Liberty Bank at 8770 Research Boulevard on April 5, 2004.

Furthermore, Rodriguez admitted that on March 18, 2004, he robbed the Washington Mutual Bank (4101 Lomo Alto Drive, Dallas, TX) stealing \$420; on March 19, 2004, the Bank of America (2130 Fort Worth Avenue, Dallas, TX) stealing \$6,600; and, on March 30, 2004, the American Bank (711 Carancahua, Corpus Christi, TX) stealing \$1,650.

Rodriguez, a convicted felon, also admitted to possessing a Browning .380 semi-automatic pistol on March 24, 2004. His criminal history includes a 1994 conviction and eight-year sentence for theft and possession of heroin in Bexar County, Texas.

The Western District of Texas prosecution resulted from an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Austin Police Department, Texas Department of Public Safety, San Antonio Police Department and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Assistant United States Attorney Gerald C. Carruth is prosecuting this case on behalf of the government.

The prosecution of this case is another example of how the United States Attorney's Offices in Texas are implementing the Department of Justice's gun crime initiative - Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide federal initiative designed to reduce gun violence in our communities. PSN promotes partnerships among federal, state, and local law enforcement to target criminals in possession of guns.

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